Gribb, Walter H.

AM 1934
sg
c.1

Boston University
College of Liberal Arts
Library

THE GIFT OF the Author

378.744
BO
AM 1934
sg
c.1

P7941

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

MYSTICISM AND ITS SOCIAL VALUE ~~AS SEEN~~ IN THE LIFE OF GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH

by

Walter Harold Squibb

(B. S. in R. E., Boston University, 1932)

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

1934

HEL

P7941

MYSTICISM AND ITS SOCIAL VALUE

Outline

Part I

1. Introduction

A. Purpose of the thesis 1

2. What is Mysticism?

A. Use of the term: 1-3

1. Historically

2. Etymologically

B. Basic definition 4-5

C. Immediateness 5-7

D. Sense of presense 7

E. Awareness of response 7-8

F. An experience of the whole self 8-10

1. Mysticism and reason 10-21

G. Analysis of the contact:

1. Psychology and the mystics

2. Nature of the self

3. The mystics' object

4. The nature of the contact

a. Absorption criticized

b. "Ontological Ambition"

H. Resulting definition 21-22

3. Types of mystical experience 23-25

4. The preparation of the individual 26-30

A. the "Mystic Way" 31-32

5. Anti-Social Mysticism

6. Mysticism and Social Value

A. Ecstacy 33-34

B. Asceticism 34

C. The Prepared Individual 34

D. Theology 34-35

E. Vicarious Suffering 35

F. "The Call" 35-36

G. The Balanced Life 36

H. Source of Power 36-37

7. Conclusion: 37

In Mysticism we have a dynamic source of social value, especially as seen in the social service activities of the historic mystics

4. Types of artificial insemination ....
5. The preservation of the fertilizing ....
   a. The Temperature ....
6. Superiority of bulls ....
7. Specialized breed types ....
   1. Ayrshire ....
   2. Guernsey ....
   3. The Holstein-Friesian ....
   4. Jersey ....
   5. Milking Shorthorn ....
   6. The Zebu ....
   7. The Brahman ....
   8. Buffalo or Asian ....

THE SOCIAL MYSTICISM OF GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH

Outline

Part II

I. Early life 1-3

A. First Religious Environment 4-5

B. Early consciousness of God. 7-9

C. His Mystical Awakening 10

2. The Growth of His Social Mysticism 10-14

A. His Theology of conversion. 15

B. The sacraments 16

C. His consciousness of God. 17-20

D. His mystical love life 21-26

E. Catherine Booth 28

F. The Inner "dark column" 29

1. "Holiness" 30

G. Emotional vicissitudes 31-32

1. His activities continue

H. The Mystical Element in His Writings 35

1. His "Mystic Way"

3. The Dynamic of his Great Social Work 36- 38

A. From the "Celestial City" to the slums. 38

B. His Conversion as a dynamic 39

C. His "Call" as dynamic 40

D. His Mystical consecration as a dynamic 40

4. Booth, the Saint 40-42

MYSTICISM AND ITS SOCIAL VALUE

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the facts bearing on the direct relationship of the experience called "Mystical" and the activities of social value that have seemed to have found their dynamic in the mystical experience. The chief line of investigation will be directed towards the element of mysticism in the life of General William Booth as found in the religious experience of this pioneer in social service movements and reforms. We shall endeavor to find out whether there is any direct relationship between his mystical experience and his social service activities. If there be any such relationship, we shall try to discover how this relationship takes place, describe and evaluate the place of mysticism in this relationship. These questions are suggestive of the attitude and viewpoint with which the writer has approached the search and study that has resulted in the following discussion.

Unfortunately, the word "Mysticism" has been employed very loosely and indiscriminately. "Even among those writers that have made a special study of the subject," says Inge,(1) "show by their definitions of the word how uncertain it is in its connotation." Its history began with

(1) Inge, CM, 3

the Greek mysteries. A "mystic" was one who was initiated into some "mysteries" of a secret nature. The word was then adopted by the Neo-Platonists who found in its methods an aid to the speculative views in Neo-Platonism. But later when Neo-Platonism became more quietistic and introspective it was used to mean the shutting of one's eyes to "external things". This later Neo-Platonism passed into Christianity and formed a basis of the Mediaeval Christian Mysticism causing a false association to cling to the word even down to the Reformation. (1) Over against this we have an etymological passage from Otto (2) that reads, "Our modern use of the word is derived from the scholastic tradition. 'Mystica' was originally an adjective qualifying the substantive 'Theologica'. The essence of the mystica theologica lay in the fact that it claimed to teach a deeper "mystery", and to impart secrets and reveal depths which were otherwise unknown. In this the Scholastic usage was following then a still older trail. For long before when men spoke of mystical theology they spoke of mystical sense, and of a mystical interpretation of the Scriptures. Such an interpretation was mystical not because it was concerned with a 'unio mystica' but because it unfolded a threefold or sevenfold hidden meaning of the scriptual text, and revealed mysteries which only the eye of the enlightened could perceive."

In recent times it has been used as an equivalent for two German words that are characteristically different:

(1) Inge, CM, 4
(2) Otto, MEW, 141

"Mystizismus, which stands for the cult of the supernatural, for metaphysical pursuits, for a spiritualistic exploitation of psychical research: and mystik, which stands for immediate experience of a divine-human intercourse and relationship."(1) It is also used to mean a metaphysical-theological doctrine of the soul's possible union with God.

(1) Jones, Art., "Mysticism", ERE, Vol. ix 83

WHAT IS MYSTICISM?

The one thing that all mystics and interpreters of the mystical experience will agree to is that in the religious experience called mystical there is made a contact with something or somebody outside of the one having the experience that is looked upon as ultimate reality, God. It must be said, however, that there are those who deny this such as Leuba but it is best if at the start one accepts the almost unanimous testimony of the mystics as factual data awaiting further investigation before passing judgment upon the data at the beginning without adequate analysis and synopsis and before a suitable hypothesis is available. To say that mysticism is "a living sense of the wonder of the world" (1) is to leave out this one essential element of contact. To use the term to designate "an ever-deepening capacity for the experience of God" (2) or to link it with its origin which Inge says is "the raw material of all religion . . . . . that dim consciousness of the beyond, which is part of our nature as human beings" (3) is too vague and indefinite.(4) The barest definition of mysticism upon which it is possible to start to build seems to me to be found in the one offered by Pratt (5) in which he says that mysticism is "the sense of the presence of a being or reality through other means than the ordinary perceptive processes or the reason. It is the

(1)Sellers, RCA, 233
(2)Underhill, MC, 90
(3)Inge, CM, 5
(4) Pratt, RC, 337
(5) Ibid., 337

sense or feeling of this presence, not the belief in it." Strickland adds another type of experience that is mystical in this basic aspect that is, the conviction "that divine influences are immediately felt, and divine resources are directly available . . . . . where they attribute to divine agency some events or outcomes in their own lives." (1)

This contact is always looked upon as "immediate" by the mystic. It is not the result of any process of reasoning or the assurance of others through whom he becomes acquainted with the experience. The awareness of this contact is for the one experiencing it and for no one else and James goes so far as to say that this "incommunicableness of the transport is the keynote of all mysticism."(2) It is this knowledge that gives the mystic his sense of its reality. He needs no assistance outside of himself in establishing the truth of his experience. In this respect he is independent. He does not necessarily rely upon the trappings of organized religion. True, he is heavily in debt to the institution but he soon rises above absolute dependence upon it with the certainty that he is directly in touch with God. This knowledge of immediateness removes the need of the purely intellectual processes though rational proofs and logical deductions are still valuable and helpful. It is the immediate contact that brings the unique assurance and primary datum of the experience.

The function of rational and logical procedure

(1)Strickland, PRE, 243-244
(2)James, VRE, 405

becomes secondary. They are regulative and critical, preserving the wholesomeness of the self in all its integrative processes. The mystic through his awareness of immediacy assumes an independence that sets him off from his fellowmen and his world in one definite respect. It emphasizes his uniqueness and worth as an individual.

This sense of independence is displayed in the above aspects very concretely and classically in Sartor Resartus:

> What are antiquated Mythuses to me? Or is God present, felt in my heart, a thing which Herr von Voltaire will dispute out of me; or dispute into me? To the 'Worship of Sorrow' ascribe that origin and genesis thou pleasest, has not that Worship originated, and been generated; it is not here? Feel it in thy heart and then say whether it is of God! This is Belief; all else is Opinion, -- for which latter whoso will let him worry and be worried. Neither shall ye tear out one another's eyes struggling over 'plenary Inspiration', and such like; try rather to get a little even partial Inspiration, each of you for yourself. One "Bible" I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw God's Hand writing to assist

weaker faculties. (1)

This contact of the mystic with his object is described by him as bringing with it a sense of the presence of the object. It is very real and near. The "sense of presense" has a reality feeling for the mystic that is beyond doubt. Just how this presence is to be explained does not discourage him. Of course, the feeling has its basis in the physical nature of the individual. It, perhaps, lies in the very subtle muscular movements that are associated with adjustment to the presence of other people in the social life of the individual which are linked up with the mental content of the mystical moment. This new association, however, does not prove anything as to the reality of the object with which the mystic claims to be in contact and whose presence is said to have been felt.

Not only does the mystic sense the presence of this object but also receives direct responses from it. He affirms the inflow of enlightenment, peace, and power, From this experience come great messages and commands. In these responses are found missions and duties and more than this the mystic claims these responses as his great sources of strength and help. Mysticism brings to the individual unknown sources of power, vitality, and vigor. The onrushes of these responses bring with them a new feeling of confidence and assurance. They quicken the

(1) Pratt, RC, 472 quoted from Sartor Resartus Bk II, Chap. ix

self, flood the mind with illuminations and insights, yes, heal and renew the bodies of those who tread "the Way" and attain "the Union".

It has been suggested in the above that it is the whole self that is involved in the experience, So far, we have emphasized the feeling states, "feeling-consciousnesses". These are basic in the experience and come in the mysterious manner described as intuitional, spontaneous, and unreasoned. But this is not to be construed so as to eliminate the rational processes of the individual from the experience, The function of the intellect is very important in the whole life of the individual and finds its meaning not when the separate experience is dealth with, a cross-section of the life of the mystic, but rather when the life of the mystic is taken as a whole. Reason has a very important part to play in the relating of the mystical experience to the whole of the mystic's life and to the whole of reality. Reason with the aid of memory survey's the experience to first establish it's reality. It sees it in the light of other experiences, establishes norms and judges the experience by those norms. It relates it to all other experiences of the self and evaluates its worth and meaning to the whole of life. Whether it is to remain as a desired leaven in the total consciousness of the individual or to be thrust aside, isolated, and condemned depends upon the intellect. As to the future experiences of that nature, if they are approved, reason will function to use

that experience as a datum for acquiring means of making other such experiences more meaningful and systematically available. Its norm will be the value of the experience in the total adjustment of the individual to its environment and its place in the total integrative process of the self in achieving its life purposes and ideals.

Reason will relate the mystical experience to all reality. It will see its meaning and implications in the light of other individuals. It will judge its moral worth and validity. The moral worth will depend upon its function in aiding the individual to live in a group. This in turn will determine its validity as a normal and useful experience. The implications of the mystical experience for the social outlook of the individual which is the basic proposition of this thesis is based upon the use of reason. Reason will seek to know what the experience implies when related to the experiences of others. It will assume that others would benefit by a similar experience. It will seek means and methods of making such experiences universally attainable. It will compel the mystic, perhaps, to "go out into the highways and hedges and persuade them to come in" --- into the truly worthful mystical life. It may even make the mystic turn his face "toward Jerusalem" to die to make the life available to all.

In the intuitional moments of the mystical life we find a subtle grounding of reason. The content of the sub-

conscious if it is to meet the judgments of value described above is the result of the past functioning of reason. Even the recognition and evaluation of the intuitions depend upon the reasonableness of them. The Kantian idea of the "practical reason" is the more adequate explanation of the true nature of the mystical intuition. It is the action of the whole self in all its reasoning along with the feelings and will. They all are functioning in a totality responding to the object of the mystical experience as a self in search of its highest realization. It is the whole self making contact with the source of its being and the matrix of its eternal meaning and value.

With this in mind it is quite easy to understand why the mystic has such difficulty in describing his experience. Though many books have been written by those who have tried to describe the indescribable, very little real knowledge has been gained as to the nature of the experience. Because the whole self is involved, the attempt to analyze the experience becomes very elusive. When one delves into the literature of the mystics one finds himself at a loss to understand it all especially if the experience is foreign to one. The mystics have spoken a language all their own. Most of the analyses have been written by enthusiastic devotees. Others have attempted to explain it all in theological language or in the technical terms of philosophy of the writer's time. We have had no scientific approach to it until

recently. With the growth of psychology, especially such branches as "Analytic Psychology" and "The Psychology of Religious Experience" we have lately been able to obtain a more adequate understanding of the mystic and his experience. "The rhapsodic language in which the mystic state is ordinarily described is both tantalizing and confusing to the psychologist." writes Conklin (1) "It is first of all obvious that those who have attempted description have had some sort of experience which is rare if not unique in their lives. Untrained in the language of exact description of mental states and processes, they have resorted to figures of speech which are at once both impressive and vague. Their descriptions are filled with the language of that particular theology in which they happened to have been schooled."

With this scientific knowledge gained in the past generation has come a more adequate insight into the nature of this "whole self" that plays so important a part in the mystical experience. And if a description of the experience is to be grasped in a definition it will be in terms of the self and its part in the experience. Therefore, let us set forth a working definition or concept of what a "self"is.

The self, or in its more complete and richest stage, the personality, is defined by one of the most widely read writers on the subject as, "the sum total

(1) Conklin, PRA, 141

of one's habit dispositions" (1) It is a consistent and continuous unit of consciousness. It is "a thing of perceptions, wants, feelings, strivings, purposes, ideas, memories, interests, satisfactions, and dissatisfactions." This is a good beginning but it is not the whole truth. The "Gestalt" psychology gives us a more adequate concept in its emphasis upon the wholeness of the consciousness of experience. The self as a whole is infinitely more than the sum of its parts. It is not units of habits, sensations, or mere reactions to stimuli. It is a psychological organism. "This is to say, a person is not merely its behavior, its 'events' but more than that, a systematizing agency that makes this behavior a personalized whole with continuing meaning and value". (2) It is an organized consciousness plus a center capable of appreciating value and in light of this value controlling its response and directing its activity towards the achievement of the richest and most meaningful personality. Only a self as a complete entity of conscious experience can give us a working principle in the analysis of the mystical experience. For only with such a conception can we account for its function as a reflective and rational being conscious of its social and cosmic relationships as well as its own unique and individual separate existence.

(1) Valentine pp 21
(2) Marlatt, WP, p 9

And what is to be said regarding the object of the mystical experience? If we are to remain within the limits of the science of psychology we cannot go beyond human experience and the description of what takes place in it. In this approach we are bound to see the elements of mystical experience to be subjective. Our descriptions of the physical and mental states will be similar to those induced by drugs and alcohol. The basis of the experience is often found to be in the sex function and nervous instability that often will be of a neurotic or pathological nature. It is not going beyond the facts to say that it is the result of "wishful" thinking or the workings of the subconscious --- indeed, the physical and psychological factors of the mystical experience have become so evident and familiar as important parts of the mystical experience that some psychologists have denied the need of bringing in an object. Of this group let us take a passage from David Syme, who in writing of the experience of Jacob Boehme states, "He imagines his soul to be in communion with God, whereas it is only in communion with itself, and the communications which he receives are only the result of the interaction of his central consciousness and the lower sphere." (1) Now, we do not disagree with the idea that this "lower sphere" is involved in the experience but we hesitate as psychologists to pronounce judgment upon the reality of the contact made by the subject and say that his communion is a deception. The fact that our analysis of

(1) Buckham, MML, 136 quoted from The Soul, 68.

experience in its subjective and emotional aspects does not bring us beyond these elements to the "encircling spiritual world" of which the mystic speaks is not to be taken as final proof that this world is non-existent. A favorite word for describing this used by psychologists is "introspection", a good word to describe the psychological process but when used to prove that the objective reality does not exist or that this object is not involved in the mystical experience it is a departure from descriptive science and also reveals a gap in the users understanding of the problem of knowledge. It is true that the object of the mystical experience is "projected" upon a finite screen by the individual from the past experience of the subject but this is true of all human knowledge. This is the only way we have of grasping anything outside of our own experience. It is also true that there have been many cases of delusion and hallucination in individual mystical experiences as there have been in all kinds of experience. It is true, furthermore, that as Coe (1) points out the descriptions of the object are in the languages of the environment of the individuals writing. The psychologist must remain in his own little field if he is to be scientific and not pass judgment upon all reality just with his data and hypotheses that are taken from but one small part of all possible data. Herman has a passage that will aid our discussion. (2) "Psychology merely presents to us the soul in the act of seeking; it

(1) Pratt, RC, 450
(2) Herman, MVM, 10

can tell us nothing about the 'object' of her search, nor even whether there is an 'object' outside of her own self-induced activity. And when psychologists here and there make the categorical assertion that religious experience is nothing more than the subjective activity of the soul revolving around its own axis, they are venturing upon a judgment which, as psychologists, they have no right to make. Psychology is a science of origins, not of validity; and to claim for it the power of deciding upon the validity or truth of ideas is, in the end, to discredit it."

But Professor Strickland argues that if it is to be fruitful in its hypothesis as to the more adequate interpretation of the mystical experience, psychology must look upon the mystic's contact with objective reality as a real factor in it. It needs no proofs of the validity of this reality and its objectivity; yet, it must assume it if it is to approach an understanding of the effects that this reality produces in the life of the mystic. To omit this would be to reduce the experience to mere auto or group suggestion, to the functioning of an organism. (1) Jones would have us think of "auto-suggestion" as "only another way of saying that God and man are conjunct in the soul, and that in the deeps of the soul, beyond our power of knowing how, Divine suggestions come to human consciousness." (2) Pratt after a long and valuable discussion of the attitude that psychology has taken and should take ends by saying, "But

(1) Strickland, PRE 252 (2) Jones, SMR xxxiii

the real influence of such a (spiritual) world or such a God upon the minds of men is in no wise incompatible with any descriptions of human experience which psychology has as yet given us or seems likely to give." (1)

May we not conclude then that it is not for psychology to dogmatically refuse to take into account the fact that the mystics claim a unique relationship to objective reality? It is, perhaps, right for psyhologists to make the suggestion as to the possible pure subjectivity of the mystical experience. "Such a possibility must be faced", says Buckham (2) "and faced with the understanding that though raised by psychology it cannot be laid by psychology." Is it not significant, moreover, that the mystics generally claim a contact with their object? By them this object is never doubted. Psychology must even point to the fact that this is so widely held. "The psychologists, "says Selbie(3) "is also justified in pointing to the large measure of agreement among the mystics, and to the intensity and authority with which they apprehend spiritual things." It is also very important to notice that the mystics look upon this object in terms of personality. The "sense of presence" is always believed to be the presence of some "one". The object is looked upon as the "Divine Other". This does not mean that the mystic will have accepted the personality of God intellectually in a definite theological system but he will turn to this object as a "Being" other than himself and outside of himself. He

(1) Pratt, RC, 457
(2) Buckham, MML, 135
(3) Selbie, PR, 264

will look to this "Other" for activity and response in the mystical relationship. Professor Brightman in speaking of this says, (1) "The 'Thou' attitude toward God is the native air of religion and is felt as truly by the mystics who find God within their own inner life, and by pantheists who believe themselves to be a part of God, as it is by theists or by seekers for the Unknown God. God may be present in the moment's experience; but he is always more than that experience. If he is found within, he is also as Boutroux expressed it, "a beyond, that is within: he is a thou somehow revealed in me." The historical fact of the belief of the mystics in a personal relationship and the resulting success of their methods built upon this belief must be considered. And whereas psychology cannot invalidate this belief but would better explain the facts of the mystical life by including it, all in all, I should think that psychologists must not omit it.

Now as to the nature of this relationship of the mystic and his object there has been many notions set forth by both the mystics and their interpreters. The actual contact has been described as being one of "absorption", "communion", "union", "fellowship", "incorporation" and many other such terms. However, it is not so important as to which of these terms is used as long as there is no contradiction of the facts implied in it or an exclusion of the essential elements of the contact being described. The one aspect upon which there has been much confusion is that of the effect

(1) Brightman, FG, 102

of the experience upon the individual as a separate center of consciousness from that of the object. The above terms have so become the victims of poor psychology and metaphysics that only a thorough analysis will reveal what these terms are to symbolize. We shall most of all find it necessary to acquire a concept of mysticism that will provide for the separateness of the subject and object.

We shall first have to disagree with Dean Inge when he quotes the following passage from the Theologica Germanica as descriptive of how the self is lost in its object in the sense that this is what actually takes place psychologically.(1)

> The self, the I, and Me, and the like all belong to the evil spirit. Behold, one or two words can utter all that has been said in many words: Be simply and wholly bereft of self ..... . In true light and true love there neither is nor can remain any I, Me, Mine, Thou, Thine and the like, but that light perceiveth and knoweth that there is a good which is above all good and that all good things are of the one substance in the one good ..... All in One as One, One in All as All.

This may satisfy the mystic who is endeavoring to describe his ineffable experience, but it will not pass the critical psychologist. It does not provide an adequate respect for the individual center of consciousness. It also infers that

(1) Inge, PIM, 106-107

in the contact between the human and the divine, the human self is swallowed up in the divine and we have the "all in One as One". The individual loses his identity and being in the divine being. This idea of complete absorption is found in its extreme forms in the religious beliefs of the East where "Nirvana" is the conceptual goal. But note I have said "conceptual" goal for I mean to infer that that is not what actually happens.

One of the characteristics of a self is to be able to identify itself through all the diverse and changing experiences that come to it. This trait is the result of a highly developed memory chiefly, which enables it to know that it is the same self now that it was in the past. Also, we are thus able to recognize our past experience as having been our own experience. (1) Now, after a mystical experience the memory of it is usually quite clear, Coe continues with the discussion thus, (2) "If a mystic were completely absorbed into a divinity without attributes, subsequent memory would not enable him to say <u>into what he</u> had been absorbed." Nor would he even know that he had been absorbed. Coe continues, "<u>Unio mystica</u> in the sense of consciousness of absolute oneness without duality is therefore only a limiting notion; it is not an experience. When it is testified to as actually occurring, what is offered us in an interpretation (by means of intellectual tools already at hand) of a gap in experience or (more probably, of an

(1) Brightman, Lectures in Philosophy of Religion, 1933
(2) Coe, PR, 274

emotion that had slight objective reference of its own." Hocking contributes a quotation from Simon, (1) "This slumber of the mind resembles at first a negation of existence, but it is the exaltation therefore . . . . . to return to the universal is to enlarge, to become divine not to abolish and lose oneself." Von Hugel, one of the greatest modern interpreters of the mystical life says of this, though not in strictly psychological language,2"The unity here is nowhere, even ultimately, the sheer Oneness of a simply identical substance, but a unity deriving its very closeknitness from its perfect organization of not simply identical elements or relations." He continues by saying that the true relationship is made possible only by the fact that "God can only give Himself to His creatures as He gives a self to them" and that with it he gives the capacity of participating in his life. (3)

This argument is rather to be put positively in that it is the process by which the person is actually seeking a more meaningful self, consciously or unconsciously. Hocking calls it an "Ontological Ambition" and explains that the individual becomes disatisfied with his world and seeks to bring himself to the One who can give a meaning to his life, fresh and new, who is the Value above the world. (4) Miss Underhill describes this as the activity of a capacity in man that allows him to rise above the animal origins of his nature into the heights of spirituality, seeking a deeper self-knowledge, coming into a more meaningful self. (5)

(1) Hocking, MGHE, 383 quote from Ecole d'Alexandrie 156-7,208
(2) VonHugel, MER, Vol. ii, 304
(3) Ibid., Vol. ii, 335, quoted from Schelling
(4) Hocking, MGHE, 367
(5) Underhill, LSLT, 217

From Pratt we shall finally take our best exposition of the place of the self in the mystical experience. "Even in those cases where mysticism has been accompanied by a loss or dimming of belief in personality as a matter of theory, it is by no means the rule that there is a corresponding loss of individuality in practice. The mystic, in fact is in religion the great individualist." (1)

May we now draw together the results of the past discussion and set forth a summarizing definition of mysticism. It will naturally be a very broad and inclusive one. But this is the position of not a few of the eminent writers in their field. Let us look at several, Selbie states: (2)

> Whenever the religious consciousness takes the form of a direct communication with the spiritual world there we have a degree of mysticism.

Louismet, in referring to the narrower definition that is often held as over against our position contributes the following as the traditional Roman Catholic viewpoint: (3)

> At this point we find ourselves confronted with the two definitions of mysticism: on the one hand the more modern or narrow definition, very much in favor today both with Catholic and non-Catholic writers, which confines mystical life within the circle of extraordinary, miraculous phenomena: and on the other hand, the wider definition, the truly Catholic traditional one,

(1) Pratt, RC, 472
(2) Selbie, PR, 255
(3) Louismet, MTF 16

> which places the essence of Mystical life in the secret intercourse of a fervent soul with God.

Jones in his great work on mysticism assumes this position:(1)

> I shall use the word mysticism to express the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relation with God, on direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence.

Without further quotation let us conclude that mysticism is the actual experience of the consciousness of the presence of God. A fellowship or union of a self with a Reality that is Someone other than that self to which it stands in a reciprocal relationship.

Types of Mystical Experience

From the above definition it can be seen that some experiences that have been looked upon as mystical because of some particular phenomenon or characteristic will necessarily have to be examined as to their place in the mystical life. It will also be seen that some types of experience not always thought of as mystical will come under this classification. It has not been unusual for certain writers to select a few extreme forms of this experience and exclude all else from this category. In fact, the popular distaste and suspicion of this term has been the result of the work of these exponents. From our point of view, however, we shall include types of many kinds and extremes in various directions. To limit the term to just these extreme cases would be to make mystical experience abnormal and rare. This is the position of no less than two outstanding contemporary psychologists, Leuba(1) and Coe.(2, On the other hand Jones would have us understand, "That there are such abnormal experiences is a fact. (however) there is no more reason to limit the word "mysticism" to this type of experience than to limit the word "love" to mean merely pathological love.

The extremist position emphasizes those experiences in which the phenomena of rapture, ecstacy,

(1) Leuba, PM
(2) Coe, PR

stigmata, and the like are found, but this is far from our viewpoint. Louismet has an interesting passage referring to this situation: (1)

> "Let us understand once and for all, that what is greatest and most admirable in the Saints who have received visions, revelations, raptures, and perhaps stigmata, and who perform miracles, is not these things but their union with God."

To those who realize this union, as our definition states, no matter how it takes place or what accompanies it the term mystical may be applied. This will include all types from the quietistic to the ecstatic. These phenomena we no longer look upon as essential of the mystical experience but as by-products. (2) "There is no difference in kind", says Selbie (3) "between the assurance of God's help and presence which any humble Christian may feel, and the rapturous absorption of the mystic in the All." We shall, however, continue to accept a difference in degree for some will realize the experience in a full and explicit manner. But these will be but few. The majority will come into the experience in an inarticulate and perhaps a less recognizable manner. (4) This we are forced to look upon as the normal mystical experience. And it is this normal type that is more socially valuable on the whole.(5) Pratt assumes this position and uses the terms "mild" and "extreme" to designate the degree of the experience.

(1) Louismet, MTF, 19
(2) Underhill, LSLT, 75
(3) Selbie, PR, 249
(4) Herman, MVM, 32
(5) Pratt, RC, 468-469

Altogether the type of experience will depend upon a number of factors such as the individual's temperament.(1) This in turn is dependent to a large extent upon the physical background and nervous system ofthe individual, his social education and habits of response, his attitudes and ideals, his religious environment and theological ideas. The whole integrative process of the individual's life will have much to say as to the type of response and expression with which this experience will associate and the behavior patterns which it will assume.

(1) Pratt, RC 366

Preparation of the Individual

What we are more concerned about is the value of the mystical experience to the individual's social adjustment and the effect of such experiences upon the integrative processes of his personality. The subjective aspect of the experience would naturally tend to introversion. This would prove destructive if this escape breaks down the individual's ability to face reality, and certainly is a factor to be guarded against. But where we have periods of introspection and concentration upon the inner life in mystics, whether they be long or short, frequent or otherwise, it is usually, not an escape from reality but a facing of it in a blunt and effective manner. It is a conscious attempt to bring a more harmonious integration of the self around its great purpose of attaining a more perfect union with its object. This involves the removal of all habits that hinder this attainment and the establishment of a discipline that will insure new desired patterns of behavior. This is known to the mystic as the "Way". We shall not detail a description of this inner struggle against undesired habits of the body and mind and for the control desired which usually takes the form of the "Threefold Way" though not necessarily so.(1) We must point out the meaning and value of this process for the individual's social life. Does it prepare him to

(1) Herman, MVM, 13

Conservation of the Total Ex-

take his place in society? What adjustment will he make to his world?

The "Mystic Way" is, as has been suggested primarily a concentrated attempt to a satisfactory level of integration. It is the process of harmonizing the self so that it may realize the new realm of complete spiritual life. Jones in one of his lectures stated it thus:

> Not a life beyond the stars, but another level of life here.

It is the attempt to attain the life of the perfected self glimpses of which are had in the momentary mystical experience of the newly awakened individual. The neophyte believes that unsuspected depths of character are revealed, of whose existence there were no premonitory evidence. (1)

Pratt says of this struggle: (2)

> To be sure we all lack perfect unity and sometimes long for it -- this is a characteristic of the moral struggle everywhere. But in the individual of mystic tendencies it is more pronounced than in the relatively simpler and more concentrated mind.

Thus this chief reason for the discipline of the "Way" is the final realization of a full and complete self-hood which the mystic believes can be found only when he touches the great "encircling spiritual world." Or as Herman puts it(3) "The whole personality of man in contact with

(1) Bruce, PCLB, 177
(2) Pratt, RC, 371
(3) Herman, MVM, 27

its Source and End". The mystic first tastes the reality of this in his early mystical experiences when this fullness is momentarily attained. It is a time when the self is aware of the fullness of his powers, so much so that he looks upon it as the result of the object beyond his center of consciousness. Jones describes this experience in a concise and authoritative manner: (1)

> Now there are times when this underlying total whole of consciousness comes into power in us in an unusual fashion, when the stored-up gains of a lifetime are at our command, and we seem to possess ourselves even down to the roots of our being. In truth at times we are aware of a More than "ourselves" impinging on the skirts of our being. There is no time in our lives of course, when we do not draw upon this wider consciousness which is the matrix in which our "ideas" and concepts are born . . . . . (however) there are, I repeat, times when in extraordinary ways the dualistic character of ordinary thought is transcended and the soul comes into possession of itself as a whole.

Not only do we gain such knowledge of our goal as described above but also great steps are made in these experiences toward the realization of that ideal itself. In the heightened emotional character of these

(1) Jones, SMR, xxiii,xxiv

experiences great changes may take place. St. John of the Cross, says, of such an experience (1)

> A single one of them may be sufficient to abolish at a stroke certain imperfections of which the soul during its whole life had vainly tried to rid itself, and to leave it adorned with virtues and loaded with supernatural gifts."

This is often described as a "conversion" experience, a dropping off of undesired habits and conflicts and the awakening of the self to higher levels of life. This is usually the initial step of the mystical process. Other steps are spoken of in this "purgative" stage such as "Sanctification" but all refer to the ascent of the self to its higher realization.

This preparation is solely for the personal welfare of the individual. It is not looked upon as a means of service. It has no moral purpose whatsoever. It is the result of the relation of the individual to the divine object. The "way" by which the individual will realize his own desire and goal. Looked upon only in this manner there is no social or altruistic attitude dominating the mystic. It is one of self interest purely. However, the mystic is also preparing himself for his social life as well. He not only emerges from his mystical experiences a disciplined individual but he also is in a better position

(1)James, VRE, 414

to know what the will of his object is for others as well as himself. He has put himself in a position, moreover, of knowing what that will is for himself. With this knowledge he must assume his tasks. Or as Eckhart says, "What a man takes in by contemplation he must pour forth in love." (1)

(1) Jemes, SMR, 238

Anti-Social Mysticism

It is true that mysticism has anti-social tendencies. History is full of results of this nature. The joy and satisfaction of the experience has drawn some into isolation to live upon the sweets of the emotion. Excess of this experience has spoiled many for the world of action and service. Mr. Coates charges mysticism with pious heartlessness.(1)

> They have thought to become so united to God, as to leave all poor sinners in the mire. They would rather swoon into the infinite than heal a broken heart or help a lame dog over the stile. Some might even be counted on, in the manner of the Emperor Nero, to hearken complacently to the music of their own sweet violin while the world was burning.

Indeed, this has often been the case. But such "spiritual gluttony" is very easily taken on in view of the immensity of the temptations. Mysticism, like, everything else desired by the self may be perilously enslaving if not controlled. The greater the pleasure the more easily will perversion take place. In fact, says Herman (1) "They were aware -- no modern critic more so -- that theirs was a perilous path; that the soul's thirst for God may be

(1) Herman, MVM, 89

Mrs. Cecil Chesterton

perverted into a thin sour craving for esoteric adventures; that spiritual gluttony may blunt and even kill all natural human feeling, all decent moral sense; that what is begun in spirit may end in the flesh, and even at times in gross casuality." These mystics not only were aware of these dangers but were first to see these perversions and denounce them. (1)

> "The most stringent prophet of righteousness and humanity approaching Mysticism from the outside could not feel the degeneracies and aberrations of Mysticism as they were felt by a Ruysbroeck, a Tauler, a St. Teresa, to whom they were as leprous sores on the body of a beloved child."

But this perversion has not been very widespread. Here and there have been individuals and groups who have fallen into this isolation but it is surprisingly little. (2) Pratt states that among the ecstatics this is usually the case. (3)

(1) Herman, MVM, 105
(2) Ibid., 82-85
(3) Pratt, RC, 407-408

Social Mysticism

But even among the ecstatics there are often social results that are significant. James writes: (1)

> Where in literature is a more evidently veracious account of the formation of a new center of spiritual energy, than is given in her (St. Teresa) description of the effects of certain ecstacies which in departing leave the soul upon a higher level of emotional excitement? "Often, infirm and wrought upon with dreadful pains before the ecstacy, the soul emerges from it full of health and admirably disposed for action."

He goes on to say that the anti-social attitudes may have befallen some passive and intellectually feeble mystics but,

> in natively strong minds and characters we find quite opposite results. The great Spanish mystics, who carried the habit of ecstacy as far as it has often been carried, appear for the most part to have shown indomitable spirit and energy, and all the more so for the trances in which they indulged.

Pratt though he doubts the social worth of ecstatic practices points out that certain individual temperaments must be looked upon as exceptions and that ecstacies are often their source of vitality. (2) These are usually the geniuses of the social as well as the mystical life. For unusual personalities like St. Francis and St. Teresa

(1) James, VRE, 414
(2) Pratt, RV, 464-466

"unusual experiences may work the birth and unfolding of larger powers" (1) than milder mystics ever possess.

The same appraisal is made of ascetic mystics by Herman: (2)

However, the relation of the general mystical experience and social value as seen in social service work is our main interest. We have commented upon it all through this discussion and have been gradually working up to Part II that follows. Let us now look at the few more different aspects of this relationship before we discuss them all concretely in the Life of General William Booth in Part II of this thesis.

Whether or not the mystical experiences of an individual will lead to social value depends upon many other elements. To evaluate the social worth of these experiences will only be possible in the individual case. However, there are certain characteristic ways in which mysticism leads to socially valuable activity. We have already discussed the manner in which the individual finds a higher integrative level of personality. This of course, is one of the first and basic contributions of mysticism to socially valuable activity. There are other direct influences of these experiences upon the social life of an individual. If the object of the mystical experience is looked upon in a definite theological manner, the subject will assume the characteristic response of that theology. This

(1) Pratt, RC, 465
(2) Herman, MVM, 179-84

is seen clearly in the contrast between the religions of the East and Western Christianity. The subject, other factors contributing, will tend to assume the characteristic responses elicited by his object as seen in his theology. One can easily see the result of a mystical experience in which the ideal of Christ is held up. No wonder Christian mystics have been "pioneers of the social conscience". (1)

"Mystical literature abounds in passages and whole books breathing what we should call a strangely modern feeling for human pain and woe ..... the 'pure sympathizing spirit'", writes Herman (2) The mystics were "feelers" for men. They seemed to suffer vicariously for others like St. Catherine of Siena, who prayed that the world's sin might fall on her or Margaret Kempe who would weep when she saw a child being beaten and pray that the sin be upon her. (3) Underhill states that many of the great saints and mystics had a keen sense of "call" to bear in their persons the burdens and griefs of the world. They said of Fox, "He bears the iniquity wherever he comes". (4) Booth lay awake nights suffering from the sights of misery and degradation he had seen during the day.

"The great mystics", says Jones (5) "all come back with a great mission". In the mystical experience ideas and insights become so changed with emotion and form great moving ideals that the mystic goes out to live so as to realize his ideals. "It is in response to such

(1) Herman, MVM, 99-100
(2) Ibid., 90
(3) Ibid., 90
(4) Underhill, MC 226 (5) Jones, Lectures at B.U.1933

insights", writes Brown, "that all great loyalties are born, whether their object be a cause or a person." (1) Inspirations are turned into heroic resolve to action. History is crammed with illustrations of this. The great "calls to service" all seem to be linked up with a "mount of vision".(2)

These insights, visions and calls are but one of the many social outcomes of the contemplative life brought about by mysticism and the search for the mystical life. The life of social activity becomes shallow and ineffective without the rhythmic practice of withdrawal and meditation. And the introvert experiences of mystical experience must be set forth in action if a balanced life is to be maintained. "Contemplation prepares for and issues in, action", writes Hall (3) "By contemplation the heavenly vision is descerned; by action it is obeyed." "Then only", Ruysbroeck (4) says, "is our life a whole, when work and contemplation dwell in us side by side, and we are perfectly in both of them at once." It is in the mystical forms of life inwardly that moral fuel and nourishment are replenished. Power as well as insight is acquired. The re-vitalized self emerges from contemplation or prayer with re-newed strength of spirit to assume its active duties.

Durkheim states (5) "The believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who has seen new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is stronger."

(1) Brown, RC, 118
(2) Herman, MVM, 55-7
(3) Hall, CES, 134
(4) Underhill, LSLT, 17
(5) Brightman, Outline of course RV, 15

"Mysticism" says Brightman, "affords access to a universal source of truth and power". (1) Mystical experiences give a certainty to the individual. "On almost all", writes Bruce(2) they confer a firmer hold on religious realities." They give each the right to say, "I know and am persuaded" and deliver them from dependence upon authority or the opinions of others.(3) This feeling of certainty and independence brings power, hope and unity enabling the person to say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." (4)

It is needless to turn to history in attempt to display concrete examples of the above conclusions, the display is already too obvious. We have tried to briefly describe this obvious historic relation of social activity and mystical experience. We may conclude ~~with~~ without further quotations of which there are many that in Mysticism we have a dynamic source of social value, especially as seen in the social service activity of the historic mystics.

In order to lead to Part II, we may also conclude with Scudder(5), that the blending of mysticism and social action gives us the perfect social reformers. And not least among these was General William Booth.

(1) Brightman, Outline of Course RV, 15
(2) Bruce, rCLB, 177
(3) Selbie, .R, 254
(4) Phil.4:13
(5) Scudder, Mysticism and Social Passion WT 122-5

PART II

The Social Mysticism of General William Booth

Introductory Note

No definite treatment of the mystical aspect of the life of William Booth has been attempted before. The following analysis of this aspect has been limited to serve the purpose of this thesis and does not pretend to deal exhaustively with it. It is to be remembered, also, that in order to analyze the relation of Booth's mysticism and his social service the description of his mysticism had to be gained from biographical sources and his own writings. The writer of this thesis has been a Salvationist all his life and has felt the influence of Booth within the circle of his organization through its spirit and tradition.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.

(Isaiah 40:31)

The Social Mysticism of General William Booth

On April tenth, 1829, William Booth, the third son of Samuel and Mary Booth was born in Nottingham, England. His father was not looked upon as a religious or devout man and had not even joined a church. His mother, though a patient, self-sacrificing and hard-working individual was not in the formal sense religious. At least William Booth never thought of her as such for he informed Mr. Begbie, his biographer, that no one had taught him anything concerning religion in his early years. Not until he attended services at the small parish in the nearby village of Sneinton, did he come under a religious atmosphere. Soon after these first connections with a church he was attracted to one of his cousins, a devout Methodist who talked to him often of religion. One question this cousin put to him one day that haunted him even though very young. He was asked, "Willie Booth, do you know that religion is something that comes to you from outside of you?" (1) Booth repeated this question to his minister sometime later and he must have caught the significance of the question and its place in the thought-life of Booth and remarked that some day soon he would be teaching in the Sunday School.

Just what place we should give this idea in its

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 38

influence upon the later religious experience of Booth is hard to estimate. However, it seems to weave itself into all of his religious thought and life, appearing continually in his theology and interpretation of his own experience. It suggests the attitude he took towards the idea of "conversion" which was the corner-stone of his religious structure, an experience that resulted from some objective and transcendental something without that reacted within.

Begbie describes briefly other influences that impressed him deeply enough to be recalled later in his life. (1) "He remembers, too, that a great impression was made upon his mind by the singing in Sunday School of a hymn, 'Here we suffer grief and pain'; the idea oppressed him and gave a new turn to his thoughts. His cousin's persistent religiousness made him later on 'a sort of teacher'; and this, he says, was 'an altogether new influence'. But he complains, even after this beginning, that no one ever spoke to him about the spiritual life. 'I do not remember, ' he says, ' a direct word about my soul -- the necessity and possibility of my being converted -- or of encouragement being spoken to me up to the date of my conversion, and very few afterwards.'"

Booth spoke, also, of the impression made upon him by his cousin Gregory. He was then struck by the "separate and spiritual life" of this humble Methodist shoemaker. He looks upon this impression as the first real source of an

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I 38-39

"indefinable, incommunicable reverence in his mind resulting from his contact with a humble shoemaker who, though he said little to the boy in a personal or direct way, conveyed a feeling to the child's soul of respect for the spiritual life." (1)

These impressions however, faded from the conscious life of Booth soon after when he was busy as an apprentice to a pawnbroker. He said he grew "utterly regardless with respect to religion" and "altogether settled down in the uttermost indifference". He regarded this stage as a period of thoughtlessness though he avers that he could remember "an inward dissatisfaction with his condition". "My heart", he said "was a blank" (2)

We have a few insights into his youthful life that are very suggestive and that lead up to the first great crisis of religious experience. He was full of fun and mischief and his boyhood breathes of the normal spirit of youth. "Nevertheless", says Begbie, "this devotion to mischief of every kind went hand in hand with a love of reading. He was affected by poetry -- the Night Thoughts of Young, and the poems of Kirke White. He also read many novels, as we have already said, and he gives us a hint that his favorite authors were Walter Scott and Fenimore Cooper."(3)

In his youth, as in all his life, he was decidedly ambitious and dreamed of greatness in manhood. Perhaps, the great love he had for fishing gave him plenty of time for

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I 39
(2) Ibid., I, 39
(3) Ibid., I, 39

dreaming and reading, as well as opportunity to busy himself in poetry, (1) and meditation. He cared little about the number of fish that pulled at his line, yet he rose up at five o'clock in the morning during the summer to sit on the banks of the River Trent with his fishing pole beside him and wait in silence until a biting fish roused him from his thoughts. (2)

His education was very meager. Although sent to a fashionable academy he cared little for his studies and when his father's business broke he was brought home and apprenticed out to a money-grabbing pawnbroker. He looked upon the early years in this environment as anything but beneficial to his spiritual life. He made companionships that were of no help and inspiration. He says of this, "I went downhill morally, and the consequences might have been serious, if not eternally disastrous but that the hand of God was on me in a very remarkable manner." (3) Begbie adds, however, "One must bear in mind that this memory was written many years afterwards, and one may be forgiven the doubt if the boy of thirteen had really gone very far down the hill that leads to moral disaster. It is more probable that the phrase means carelessness in ideas, frivolity in conduct, and indifference to religion." (4)

But soon he was overtaken by a very serious event that must have hollowed out his young heart and left him leaning less upon his immediate circle. The death of his

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I , 40
(2) Nelson, BF, 10
(3) Begbie, LGWB, I, 42
(4) Ibid., I, 42

father sent his thoughts inward toward the mysteries of life that now overshadowed his young life. Begbie says of this experience,(1) "No doubt the death of his father made a deeper impression upon his young mind than he remembered in his old age. One does not think that any child, but particularly a child of his temperament, could be called suddenly at night to the death-bed of his father, could witness and share in the spontaneous service at the bedside, and finally behold, in the wavering and ghostly candle-light, the solemn almost terrifying mystery of death, without thinking of his own soul and the life beyond death as it touched him in his innermost thought."

In fact, it seems that from about that time he began with no help or guidance from any other creature to become more interested in religion. He was breaking away from the church of England and attending the Wesley Chapel. He recalls that from the services he attended at the latter place he received only general impressions. Though he looked upon his experience of conversion a little later as a sudden occurance; nevertheless, we can see and he himself said that there was a gradual process taking place within him that was finally to result in a great emotional crisis. At the Wesley Chapel Sunday School he was being influenced by one Isaac Marsden, his class leader, who was sowing the seeds of his later experience and growth. From his very early years he had longed for something that had never been given

(1)Begbie, LGWB, I, 43

him by his environment. He had a deep sense of guilt that now was becoming quite evident. This perhaps, says Begbie, was nothing more than a gradual pressure of his former unhappiness. He spoke of this period later on in words that describe the experience clearly, too clearly, says Begbie, for his state was a more vague and indefinite feeling, cloud-like and inexpressible. (1) It was a "torture of divine things, a consciousness of unrest, a longing for satisfaction" "a feeling towards and a longing after some mysterious, beautiful and rapturous embrace which they feel is coming towards them from the invisible kingdom of dreams."

"One thing is certain", writes Begbie, (2) "Through out his childhood William Booth was overshadowed by a feeling of the nearness of God, He never knew the isolation of even a transitory atheism. Whether he was mischievous or good, whether he was 'worldly' or unselfish, he believed in God. He was by no means in love with this faith, the sense of God by no means contributed to this happiness. But he was perfectly certain of God's existence. He speaks of 'that instinctive belief in God' ... Oppressed by his faith and with no guidance from any one, the boy whose whole childhood had been darkened and embittered, the boy whose nature was passionate, headstrong, impulsive, and charged with the spirit of leadership, came at last to long for escape from himself, determined to make a fight for his own peace of mind."

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 46-47
(2) Ibid., I, 47

This sense of God's reality was deepening in his soul along with the pressure of unhappiness that bore down upon him." He was vaguely but hauntingly anxious to arrive at some religious understanding with his own soul." (1) This growing need of peace and decision was gradually making his life more wretched. For two years he was aware of this heaviness and anxiety. In his journal he tells how he attended class meetings and sought continually to get close to God" and "to right himself with God."

Finally the immediate definite steps to the final climax of his "conversion" arrive. We have this experience in his own language from which we shall quote: (2)

> When as a giddy youth of fifteen I was led to attend Wesley Chapel, Nottingham, I cannot recollect that any individual pressed me in the direction of personal surrender to God. I was wrought upon quite independently of human effort by the Holy Ghost, who created within me a great thirst for a new life. I felt that I wanted in place of the life of self-indulgence to which I was yeilding myself, a happy, conscious sense that I was pleasing God, living right, and spending all my powers to get others into such a life. I saw that all this ought to be, and I decided that It should be . . . . Yet I had that instinctive belief in God

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I 50
(2) Railton, ALGWB, 9-12

which, in common with my fellow-men, I had brought into the world with me. I had no disposition to deny my instincts which told me that if there was a God, His laws ought to have my obedience and His interests my service . . . . . But all the time the inward Light revealed to me that I must not only renounce everything I knew to be sinful, but make restitution, so far as I had ability, for any wrong I had done to others before I could find peace with God. The entrance to the Heavenly Kingdom was closed against me by an evil act of the past which required restitution. In a boyish trading affair I had managed to make a profit out of my companions, whilst giving them to suppose that what I did was all in the way of a generous fellowship. As a testimonial of their gratitude they had given me a silver pencil-case. Merely to return their gift would have been comparatively easy, but to confess the deception I had practiced upon them was a humiliation to which for some days I could not bring myself to doing.

I remember as if it were but yesterday, the spot in the corner of a room under the chapel, the hour, the resolution to end the matter, the rising up and rushing forth, the finding of the young fellow I had chiefly wronged, the acknowledgement

> of my sin, the return of the pencil-case: the instant rolling away from my heart of the guilty burden, the peace that came in its place, and the going forth to serve my God and my generation from that hour.

Thus Booth came into a new sense of his union with God, a deeper consciousness of the presence of the divine in his life. This conversion he looked upon throughout all his life as the real beginning of the realization of his own immediate contact with Reality that flooded in upon him. He surrendered his personality to that mysterious beyond that was no less than "instinctive" to him. Begbie remarks that James' definition of conversion describes this experience nicely, "the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes, unified and consciously right, superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities." (1)

Pratt's description of the first phase of the mystical development seems to be fulfilled in this experience very adequately. (2) Though Booth's description is given in the language of the theology of his day, and denomination, the general process of his awakening seems to be that which is common to the mystics generally. Thouless, in his treatment of adolescent conversion (3)

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I 51
(2) Pratt, RC 367-368
(3) Thouless, IPR 216-219

analyses the above details and concludes that though some details are exaggerated it is conventional adolescent experience but states that its results were "permanent" and "extraordinarily fruitful". That it has the characteristics of a mystical conversion seems to be quite evident. Booth looked upon his "thirst for a new life as the direct work of the Holy Ghost". The "inward light" and relationship to God were to him very real and immediate. His sense of certainty, was very much in evidence. Railton in referring to this aspect states (1) "That certainty which rests not upon any study of books, even of the Bible itself, but upon the soul's own believing vision of the Lamb of God who has taken its sins away; that certainty which changes in a moment the prison darkness of the sin-chained into the light and joy and power of the liberated slave of Christ."

This release from those things that kept him from a fuller and richer life, this emergence from a smaller world of existence into a larger whole commonly known as conversion, says Selbie (2) is the first stage in the process of the mystical life. The awakened soul purged of its limitations and restraints begins its ascent to the constant communion with the Infinite. This was Booth's experience, and it was the beginning of his long and struggling journey along the "way" to a life-long consciousness of the presence of God which was his throughout a life of activity and service to his fellowmen. Howard

(1)~~Theuless,-IrR~~ Railton, ALGWB, 14
(2)Selbie, PR, 256

writes, "Out of this idea of conversion, as not only the most powerful motive force in life, but as a force which was, so to speak, waiting to be applied to all, arose the whole Salvation Army Movement." The basic teaching of that world-wide organization is that an individual, no matter how completely disintegrated he may be, can find new life through a direct contact with the Reality beyond himself. Booth's only hope for the world and the individual was conversion -- such as he had himself experienced. He looked upon it as a divine miracle and placed it at the heart of his theology.

His theological ideas remained much the same throughout his life. He cared little for the thought problems of religion. He accepted the ideas of early Methodism as he found them in Wesley. The practical life of activity and expression demanded his attention. With a world of evil and sin all about him he found little use for books and study. In the Foundation deed of 1878 we find the main structure of his religious beliefs. (1) In these brief statements he arranged his dogma that still is accepted in Army circles. They contain nothing but the theology of his day which to Salvationists generally, even now, is the complete and unchangeable truth. Begbie, in referring to these Ten Articles of Faith, (2) states, "Even to the most inexperienced theologian, brevity must seem a dangerous convenience. But it will be borne in mind

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 361-362
(2) In Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine

by all generous students of religion, that the man who here expressed, or attempts to express, his Christian Faith in terms of theology, was one conscious in a supreme and a very acute degree of God's existence, and of the frightful suffering and havoc wrought by sin. He was a prophet more than a theologian".

Those doctrines, however, were given a new dynamic by Booth in his emphasis on the practical results of conversion, the center from which all else flowed. "He had been guided, he tells us, largely without human intervention, almost entirely by the Spirit of God, to perceive that the very soul of Christian Revelation -- making it a religion altogether different from every other religion and every other philosophy under heaven - is the divine miracle of conversion."(1) "Conversion with him was the divine focus revealing all things in their absolute perspective" (2) The only reason for bringing in theological dogma was to aid in bringing about the conversion experience in the lives of others. "How a man was to gain conversion -- this carried him into the field of doctrine; but the dogma of his daily life, the conviction of his active soul, was the central and illuminating dogma of a New Birth." (3) The clergy were all preaching the same Gospel but Booth saw it as but part of their formal creed, stored away in the high-walled treasury of the steeple-houses. His passion became the preaching to those who most needed it, the one

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 75
(2) Begbie, LGWB, I 76
(3) Ibid., I, 76

thing that could save them from their sin and misery.

For Booth, Salvation meant nothing without conversion, individual experience of God's redeeming power. Later this stand brought him in to many conflicts with historic Christianity and one important diversion is significant. He was finally led to abandon the sacraments of the church. The loss of the rite of Baptism was not as significant as that of the Eucharist for he replaced the former with a ritual very similar to that of the church. The latter was simply dropped from Army practices. His practical reasons for this were sound and logical. The "converts" were mostly former victims of strong drink and the taste and odor of wine was a real danger. Even when colored water was introduced, the ritual was anything but beautiful and meaningful. His communicants were from the wildest and roughest elements of the slums. They not only saw nothing in it but also they were unable to perform it with the dignity and solemnity that it required. His assistants saw in it mere priestcraft and formalism. However, the one factor in Booth's final decision against it was his faith in the idea of conversion as the one means of bringing God into one's life. "The ultimate decision of William Booth", writes Begbie (1) "was reached on the one unassailable ground that his business with suffering and sinful humanity was the stern and difficult business of redemption." Booth stated (2) himself that "there must be no baptismal service that can

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 426
(2) Ibid., 426

delude any one into a vain hope of getting to Heaven without being 'born again'. There must be no Lord's Supper 'administered' by anybody in such a way as to show anything like priestly superiority of one over another - every saved person being 'a priest unto God'". "He came to suspect symbolism", continues Begbie (1) and to dislike the very sound of the word Sacrament. He believed that men are only too ready to adopt excuses for idleness in the spiritual sphere; that self-analysis is put upon one side by a great majority of those who lean upon Institutionalism; that the life of absolute self-sacrifice and entire dependence upon God is hindered by a formalism which appears to set a priest between God and the soul . . . . . It will be seen, then, that in first relegating the Sacraments to an unimportant position, and then definitely abandoning their observance, the real object of William Booth was to lay every emphasis in his power on the central necessity of conversion." To him the beginning of real religion came through a changed heart. "This thunderous preacher proclaimed the equality of every man in the sight of God, declared that no pagan beauty, no mystic rite, no tender symbolism from poetry of superstition could set a soul right in the eyes of the Almighty Judge.")2)

The sacraments were not essential to the fundamentals of the Salvation Army and its teaching. There were but two things to be done by Salvationists, first, become

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 427
(2) Ibid., 427

converted and then convert others. In the early days of the Army, before the Eucharist was abandoned, such occasions were to comply with two instructions from the General, "There must never be a sacramental service at the end of a meeting so as to prevent the possibility of inviting sinners to the mercy seat.", and such occasions were to be "at once followed by an open-air demonstration, so that the life and death pledge may be acted upon immediately." (1)

Evelyn Underhill has a passage that will fitly close our discussion at this point. (2) "He (the mystic) may be -- often is -- a sacramentalist; but if so, only because the symbol or the sacrament help him to touch God . . . . . .The moment the mystic suspects that any of these things are obstacles instead of means, he rejects them, to the scandal of those who habitually confuse the image with the reality."

Cardinal Manning once said to Booth,(1) "You have an abiding sense of the presence of God." Begbie says of him, (2) "God was the supreme concernment of his life. Everything else brought into relation with this immense interest dwindled into insignificance . . . . . So tremendous was his sense of God, that he never questioned it, rarely scrutinizing it, refusing to paralyze his devotion and his senses by a moment's incredulity concerning this subjective conception of the Infinite. He had one thought, to live absolutely in accordance with God's will." Even before his conversion he

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 426
(2) Underhill, EM, 5
(1) The War Cry, April 6, 1929 (No, 2469) p.17
(2) Begbie, LGWB, I, 61

had a vague and strange relationship to the Beyond. He himself called this an "instinctive belief in God." (1) This became a deep craving and yearning after something that was finally satisfied in his conversion experience. Throughout his life he had the same growing sense of the presence of God in his life. When in his early sixties he wrote to his daughter Emma,

> I feel like beginning life afresh this morning, my heart is stirred with earnest desires to realize more of the indwelling presence of God. What an opportunity for usefulness is mine. "Who is sufficient for these things?" Oh, my Lord, my sufficiency is of Thee. (2)

This consciousness of God did not take on the finished beauty and delicate distinctness that is found in some of the contemplative mystics. It deepened and grew but instead of weaning him to the solitudes of contemplation and worship it drove him to a rugged life of action and social service. Lady Henry Somerset in her conversations with Begbie analyzes it with insight though from a pedestal of a high churchwoman,

> I think that he saw God, saw Him quite clearly, <u>but through vulgar eyes.</u> I do not mean <u>social vulgarity</u>, of course. I do not mean anything <u>banale</u> and snobbish by that term. I mean that his spiritual vision was always colored by the

(1) Nelson, BF, 30
(2) Begbie, LGWB, II, 231

> coarseness and the hardness of his early training. He saw God clearer than almost any man in his generation, but with the eyes of a provincial who had suffered hardships. And when his spiritual life deepened, as it certainly did deepen, he had become so possessed by his huge task of world-wide social reform that he really had not a single moment in which to acquaint himself with the spirit of the Church, I am quite sure that he really never came to know Anglican Christianity."(1)

Nowhere else can we find a better picture of Booth's inner life than in his beautiful love letters to Catherine Mumford. If one were to begin to describe in detail his religious experience in his early manhood it could be done no more effectively than to quote extensively from these letters. His wooing of Miss Mumford was undertoned and backgrounded by a deep consciousness of his relationship to God. Somewhere in Baron von Hugel's two great volumes on St. Catherine of Genoa (2) he deals with the problem of many mystics who feared that their earthly devotion in the marriage relationship would lessen their love, and awareness of God's presence. Booth had this same experience that is typical of the attitude he maintained throughout his engagement. In giving his reasons for not wanting to rush into an engagement he writes:

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 424
(2) vonHugel, MER, Vol. II

4. I should feel such a powerful earthly bond taking up my feelings and drawing off my heart from entire and complete devotion to God.

5. God has of late been satisfying me with Himself, and I should fear setting up or creating another God, especially seeing that He has placed me in a position that my heart has so long desired and given me every comfort I wish. (1)

It was only after such religious considerations as the above and a final assurance that their relationship to God and service to society would be deepened and enlarged that they decided to arrange the engagement. If Catherine and William Booth added nothing else to the literature of mysticism, these most spiritual dialogues would give them a permanent place with the classics of the inner life. Begbie speaks of these even more extravagantly. In referring to one in particular he says (2) "one of her letters indeed, deserves to live, and probably will live, as one of the beautiful documents in the literature of mysticism."

As the foregoing paragraph leads us to infer, Catherine Booth also had a deep strain of the mystical element. Indeed, she approaches the classical types of mysticism even more than William Booth. Nelson is as enthusiastic in his estimation of Catherine Booth's mystical life as Begbie is. He writes, (3)

Catherine Booth was more of the mystic. She

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 139-140
(2) Ibid., P48
(3) Nelson, 169

> had a good deal of Catherine of Sienna in her make-up. It is possible that if she had been leading the Mission the most devoted mystics of all time would have sprung up under her leadership in England; but there would have been no Salvation Army.

Her daughter, Evangeline in comparing her to her husband the man of action, passion, intuition, and practical affairs gives us an insight into the temperament of Catherine Booth. She describes her as having a mind "illumined by the candle of truth and philosophy . . . . . a student of moral and spiritual categories, with the prescience of a prophetess . . . . . She was metaphysical, serene, calm, like the night of stars . . . . . she created an atmosphere of spirituality." (1) One excerpt from her letters to William Booth must suffice to reveal her deep spiritual nature and the high sense of God's immediate presence in her life as well as her ability to describe these experiences:

> My soul is now like the temple deserted; bereft of the abiding manifestation of God's presence; receiving only now and then a transitory ray, a short and flickering illumination; but I am tired of living thus, my soul pants, yea even fainteth again to behold the brightness of <u>His</u> glory, to abide in the sunshine of His smile. In Him I <u>have</u>

(1) <u>The War Cry</u> April 6, 1929 (No. 2479) p. 10-11

found solid peace, in Him I am resolved to find it again, and oh, glorious possibility, I may regain what I have lost, yea with abundant increase.

Who can estimate the influence that Catherine Booth had over her husband? How can we estimate the dynamic that William Booth found in his deeply mystical partner as she guided and encouraged him in his very great work. Surely such an influence could not but have strengthened and deepened the mysticism of Booth. May we not conclude here that the social value that resulted from Booth's mighty life of activity found a deep source of guidance, power and strength directly and indirectly in the deep spiritual nature of his wife.

Begbie estimates this to be considerable "That which must chiefly interest the student of this man's extraordinary career is the immense influence exerted on his spiritual development by the woman he loved; so great and high indeed is this influence, that one may even doubt if his name had ever risen above the level of ordinary preacher but for the constant pressure and the never-lifted consecration of Catherine Mumford's beautiful spirit." (1)

However, William Booth never did find things to move in a smooth satisfactorily manner. His whole ministry was one of conflicts and crises. He literally battled his way through great storms of opposition and discourage-

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 184

ment. He was ridiculed, misinterpreted, slandered and condemned. Yet, he sailed ahead finally to win the favor of the world. At the same time he passed through a long spiritual struggle within his own life. Begbie finds this struggle disclosed in his letters and compares this aspect of his life with that of Father Tyrrell: (1)

> The main interest of these letters is the revelation they afford, however crudely, of a man's struggle with own soul. William Booth was not born a saint, any more than St. Augustine or St. Francis. He had faults; he had weaknesses; he had roots of sin. One discovers in these letters, even when the writer flies off to the religious phraseology of the day for a release from pitiless self-analysis, that he was fighting a very great, a very terrible battle for his soul's existence. They do not give one so easily and so movingly the same sense of conflict which one finds in the letters and very honest autobiography of Father Tyrrell; they are entirely devoid of literary charm; they do not deal with the niceties of scholasticism, nor mount into the empyrean of philosophy; nevertheless to one who reads with sympathy, remembering the distance which separated the one from the other, there is something of the same spiritual struggle, the same spiritual agony, in these rough letters

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 183-184

of William Booth as flowers like a living fire in the writings of Father Tyrrell.

Begbie immediately follows this with a very significant passage linking up this struggle with his greatness and social activity: (1)

> It will probably come as a revelation to those accustomed to think of William Booth as the white haired, gentle, and patriarchal head of the Salvation Army, that he had to fight for his faith, that he was often cast down into an abyss of despondency, that his heart cried out from the depths of an exceeding bitterness for the sympathies and consolations and domestic kindness of humanity. And yet reflection should surely convince us that so deep and boundless a love for mankind as that which characterized his life's work could only have emerged from tempest and peril of shipwreck, and could only have come from agony of the heart and through blindness of tears.

In his letters to Miss Mumford, William Booth writes of this "dark column in the inner life" of his spirit.

> You know me. I am fitful, very; I mourn over it, I hate myself on account of it. But there it is; a dark column in the inner life of my spirit. "You know it." Bless you; I will try; but suppose I fail to make myself better, thou wilt bear with

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 184

me and I will try and be all that thou desirest. I pray for help from on High. Oh yes, God will give it me.

These struggles were partly intellectual. His self-questionings, doubts and scepticisms made him question the truth of his message and methods. But through them all, says Begbie (1) "He felt himself called by God; he knew himself tempted in a hundred directions from a perfectly pure response to that call; and those doubts and questionings, which his intellectual power was unable to face and answer, he ascribed, naturally and logically to the forces of evil." But the major aspect of these darknesses and conflicts were of his whole life, struggles of the self for a more integrated and harmonized level of life. It was his relationship to God and His will. His conflict was to destroy in himself everything that blurred his sight of the Eternal. He was faced with a complete offering of himself and all he had to the absolute leadings of the Light that was his. (2) Booth himself describes this experience in some advice he sent to his son, Bramwell, "Look directly to God for light, and guidance. Try and please Him in everything.

Begbie says of this aspect of his experience, "His one tendency towards mysticism lay in this direction, and unless we perfectly acquaint ourselves with the character of this tendency we shall miss the secret, of his inner life." (3) Just what this means I am unable to say for the few uses of

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 255
(2) Ibid., I, 185
(3) Ibid., I, 377

the term mysticism in this writer's two volumes of Booth are not sufficient to convey just what his conception of mysticism is. It is not, however, as wide a conception as we have given it in this thesis. What is more important in the relation of this inner experience of Booth's and mysticism is the marks it carries by which we can locate it in our above psychological set-up.

Before we analyze this relation let us acquaint ourselves with the doctrinal point which expounds this problem in the language that Booth used. One of the cardinal articles of faith in the Salvation Army is that of "holiness" or "Sanctification". This doctrine was set forth by Booth in the Foundation Deed of 1878 and reads as follows: (1)

> X We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be "wholly sanctified", and that "The whole spirit and soul and body" may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is to say, we believe that after conversion there remain in the heart of the believer inclinations to evil, or roots of bitterness, which unless overpowered by Divine grace, produce actual sin; but that these evil tendencies can be entirely taken away by the Spirit of God, and the whole heart, thus cleansed from everything contrary to the will

(1) Handbook of Doctrine

> of God, or entirely sanctified may, by the power of God, be kept unblamable and unreprovable before Him.

It is this doctrine that was the source of his trouble or rather this is the outgrowth of it. It was significant because of the fact that it caused a change in his attitude towards conversion. For with this doctrine, conversion became but the beginning of the way to "entire sanctification", or the complete indwelling of the "Spirit of God."

This reads like the description of the negative or "purgative" stage of the "Mystic Way" as given by Pratt. (1)

> The Soul that is filled with the love of sin will have no room for the love of God. The mind that is burning with hot lusts, that is the prey of tempestuous passions and worldly desires of any kind, can never give to the thought of God that quiet contemplation which is the condition and the beginning of "God's presence."
>
> But moral purity of the ordinary kind is not sufficient for him who aspires to an extraordinary mystic life. The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and in this deadly conflict it will not do for him

(1) Pratt, RC p. 374-375

who aims at complete mastery to remain merely upon the defensive.

Booth was struggling for this complete mastery and unity of his soul. He did not become an ascetic as some of the great mystics did in their preparation for service. He continued his activities because of the overwhelming passion he had to help those about him. He piled activity upon activity, never giving himself very much time to analyze his conflicts, ever at work to use what he had found already that would work and that did show results in the lives of others. He was aware of his own imperfection yet he refused to withdraw from the field of service. God had not only showed him his weaknesses but had also commanded him to use what strength he did have to lift the levels of those who were sunk in the low valleys of sin and helplessness.

Before we discuss the active side of Booth in his work of social service and its relation to his mystical life there are a few additional aspects of his life that are of interest to the student of mysticism. First, there is the rhythmic process that is common in most great mystics of passing from periods of elation and ecstacy to those of dejection and dryness. These are to be found in Booth's experience, especially in his early life, not with any regularity, seemingly; yet their extremities were quite far apart though never really bearing on the pathological. Begbie is speaking of these emotional changes and says: (1)

> Of William Booth it might be said that no one ever went through more emotional vicissitudes than he did, and it was the purity, the sincerity, and the intensity of this emotion which, in all its vicissitudes, drove the man onward and forced its way into everything he attempted.

Nelson links these alternations with his physical condition:(2)

> They said he was mercurial, and that he would go from the deepest depths of gloom to the heights of hilarity in a moment. It is well known that he suffered tortures from indigestion all his life, from boyhood to old age. How he managed to live so long is a mystery. He was a periodic sufferer from neuralgia; and if anything can reconcile a man to sudden death it is that

(1) Begbie, LGWB II, 8
(2) Nelson, BF, 257-258

> ailment. And yet in the midst of severe pain from indigestion and neuralgia, he would throw himself into his work and forget all his pains. In this way he forgot his gloom.

Begbie resumes the analysis as follows in its relation to his "call": (1)

> With such a temperament he was destined to suffer the dark reactions of ecstacy and boundless confidence. There were moments when his soul was plunged into dejection, moments when he doubted his call, moments when he was thrown into despair merely by contact with a shallow culture or a little theological pomposity.
>
> But again and again the youth threw off the oppression of this scepticism, felt within himself strong and indubitable the call of God. The young man's tragedy was this, that he felt at his highest moments of ecstasy so boundless and so utter a gratitude to God for bliss of such incomparable rapture that he could not doubt in those moments of ravishment his power, to save mankind by lifting them up with him into this same region of faith. But when ecstacy had passed, when the soul had returned to its poor troubled and shabby tenement of clay, then came the natural reaction which all idealists

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 109

> experience -- the feeling of exhaustion, the haunting fear that never can one lift humanity to God.

Booth in writing of this darkness and dryness and how it affected his work said, (1)

> I wish I were in a more satisfactory state spiritually. I feel almost dead; powerless. Consequently, my preaching and praying in public has but little affect on the people. But wishing produces no improvement. O that God would come and give me some new light or some new powers. Will you pray for me? I never felt less emotion and power in prayer in my life. And I am sure I don't know then what to do.

Nelson, however, in speaking of these peiods of "despondency and self-disgust" which occurred "all his life" states that they never interfered with his work. Booth would work as hard as half a dozen ordinary men and would leave one meeting tired to death and dejected only to plunge into another. (2)

Begbie has a paragraph on this aspect of Booth's experience that is not only an aid to us in understanding the inner life of Booth but also with what informed keeness our chief biographer appreciated the mystical aspect of Booth. In relation to that great inner

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 304
(2) Nelson, BF, 86-87

conflict and struggle that was Booth's he writes:(1)

> It is part of his tragedy that he was occasionally visited during these difficult years by that eclipse of faith which neither mystic nor saint (so far as I know) has ever escaped, plunging out of unearthly light into darkness black as death, losing the sense of spiritual reality, and feeling himself not only forsaken of God, but inhabiting a universe where God is not. Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani? is a cry which has been wrung from the souls of honest saints down all the ages. To the mystic this terrible experience is so well known that it has lost its terrors, and he waits with folded hands and quiet breast for the return of the light; but to William Booth, the man of action, who knew little of the literature of mysticism, and who had rather taken the Kingdom of Heaven by storm than entered its gates with joy, this darkness of the soul was a sympton of something wrong within, and he agonized with "his might of the soul" and rent his heart with hands of violence.

As Begbie remarks in the above quotation, Booth was not steeped in the classics of mysticism. When he wished to describe the vision that conveyed his call to

(1)Begbie, LGWB, II, 58-59

him he was at a loss how to do it, saying (1) "The idea, or heavenly vision, or whatever you call it, overcame me." However, he was acquainted with the Bible. He was a follower of Paul in his theology and active ministry; nevertheless, he loved the Gospel of St. John and many traces of the languages of that book are evident. For instance in describing his conversion he speaks of the "inward Light" (2) Begbie does not care to class him as a mystic, saying that his active disposition would not allow him time and desire for the contemplative life." It was a life lived frankly and honestly, so far away from the morbid center of self-introspection, so completely at that uttermost circumference of being where self is consumed in a passionate care for others."(3) True he looked upon himself as a soldier rather than a saint. Yet "again and again he expresses a burning and consuming desire for deeper spirituality." (4)

"He was always seeking for that serenity of the soul which is the saint's reward", says Begbie, (5) "a deeper joy than the exhilaration of the soldier, a more lasting and a more permeating strength than ever comes from the exercise of battle, To the end of his life he was haunted, dimly and vaguely perhaps, by something in the spiritual life which he had missed and which he sighed for as one of the rewards of Heaven". He really loathed public parades, continues

---

(1) Coates, rP, 76
(2) Railton, ALGWB, 10
(3) Begbie, LGWB, I, 62
(4) Ibid., I, 277
(5) Ibid., I, 278

Begbie, (1) and had a real love for quietness, privacy and repose. "There were moments in his life, as he himself told me, says Begbie (2) "when he looked away from the mechanism of evangelization and desired acquaintance with the large serenities of mysticism . . . . . But a man whose work was spreading all over the world as his was spreading at that time, and who knew as sharply and decisively as he knew the miseries and iniquities of mankind, would naturally postpone mysticism for a future day, for some expected, longed-for, and never-to-be-realized vacation. The immediate necessity was forever under eyes."

Coates writes: (3) "There was too much of the humanitarian in William Booth, however, to be bridled by the devotee who would spend hours and nights in prayer when the cry of the despairing is ringing in his ears."

It must not be overlooked however, that the General was extremely strict in his periods of private and family devotions. It is said of him that he let nothing interfere with his private prayers. It is true that often after he had worked strenuously all day that, as one of his associates likes to remark he would kneel down and tell God that He knew how tired he was and then jump into bed. However, it also was not unusual for him to be so burdened with his own struggles or with his work that he would wrestle all night in prayer, Bible reading and meditation. It was out of such struggles as this that his powerful

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 436
(2) Ibid., II, 162-163
(3) Coates, PP, VI

writings emerged. His theory of private devotions may be seen in the rules he set forth for his soldiers to follow(1) This section is introduced by the following paragraph:

> 6. For many reasons the Soldier will find private communion with God not only profitable but absolutely necessary to the maintenance of Salvation. His experience in this respect will only be in keeping with that of the most eminent saints that ever lived.

Then he proceeds to outline some helps and rules, that there should be fixed periods, that nothing should interfere with this schedule, that special subjects should be used to guide these periods, that it should be thoughtful and not shiftless, and that:

> (e) In every attempt to draw near unto God, there should be the effort to realize His presence. The soul should say to itself: "God is here; He is listening to me now. I am speaking to Him." Faith will bring God nigh.

Booth's own writings have passages that are truly and intensely mystical even though the language is that of the Nineteenth Century Evangelical Christianity and is "sometimes of a violent and sometimes of a very crude, almost childish character." (2) In another passage Begbie in refering to these passages says, (3) "The phrases which shock, or grate, or disgust are only blunders in the

(1) Booth, ORSSA, 16-17
(2) Begbie, LGWB, I, 394
(3) Ibid., I, 418

symbolism of language. The fact beneath the words is the fact of human nature radically changed, verily liberated and enlarged absolutely convinced of union with the Divine." The first short passage we shall quote reveals his overwhelming joy in his fellowship with God. It reminds one of the nights of prayer of St. Francis when all he could manage to repeat, so great was his ecstacy, was "My God! My God! What art Thou? What am I?"

> God! oh to compass the word -- who tries? God, Omnipotent, Almighty -- Omniscient -- Everywhere. And oh, wonder of wonders, my Lord, and my God. (1)

Knowledge of Salvation was to be looked upon as coming direct from God. Booth believed in a mystic experience for all, even to the lowest and most disintegrated person in the slum-world, an experience that brought not only the assurance by way of a mystical sense but also by a new life of unity and power.

> My brethren, if you have salvation you are sure of it. Not because at the corner of the street or from the stage of the theatre you have heard it preached. Not because you have read with your eyes, or heard read by others in that wonderful Book, the wonderful story of the love of God to you . . . . . These things may have led up to it. But these things, wonderful

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I 394,395

> as they may be, have not power to make you sure of your lot and part in the matter of salvation. Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but God Himself, by His Spirit, has made this known. (1)

What I believe is one of the most interesting passages to the student of mysticism is the essay on the spirit of the Army in which he dramatically has seven spirits describe their function in the life of a Salvationist. (2) The "Spirit of Purity" explains the six "stages" of the ascent of a soul up the "mount of Purity"to the "Celestial City". This suggests Booth's own conception of the "Mystic Way". We shall quote selected passages describing these stages:

"To begin with, there is the awakening stage, where the climbers obtain their first fair view of this holy hill . . . . . Sometimes the desire to ascend the holy hill is awakened by the pure light which every now and then shines from the summit direct into the travellers' hearts . . . . . .

"A little higher up, and you reach the starting place. Here those who fully resolve upon seeking holiness of heart first enter their names in the "Travellers' Book." On this plateau I observe that there is a great deal of prayer . . . . . .

(1)Begbie, LGWB, I, 408
(2)Railton, ALGWB, 302-305

" But still ascending we come to the wrestling stage . . . . Here you will find posted on the sides of the rocks in all directions, placards bearing the words: "The things I would do those I do not, and the things I would not do, those I do, and there is no spiritual health in me." . . . . .

" So persevering with our journey, higher up, very much higher up, we come to the sin-mastering stage . . .

" And now, close at hand is the stage of deliverance, where the triumph is begun . . . . . .

" But there is one plateau higher still which, like a tableland, covers the entire summit of the mountain, and that is the maturity stage.

" Here the graces of the Spirit have been perfected by experience, and faith, and obedience, and the soul does the will of God as it is done in Heaven, united with the eternal companionship of that lovely being: the Spirit of Purity. "

But Booth does not leave the individual there bathing in the pure delight of the "maturity stage" of this "Mystical Marriage". This is but the climax of preparation of the individual to go out into the highways and byways to bring others into this same way of ascent toward self-fulfillment. From the heights of celestial beauty they will plunge into the depths of human misery if they catch the full vision. They are to bring their purified lives

into the dark places of the world so that God may pour out his Light into the lives of others. Booth writes: (1)

> The men and women around you are in the dark. Oh, how ignorant they are of God and everlasting things! They cannot see the vile nature of the evil, and the foul character of the fiends that tempt and rule them . . . . . God wants their eyes to be opened. The Spirit can do the work, and through you, He wants to pour the light . . . . . .
> God wants you to be holy, in order that He may do mighty works through your instrumentality.

This social passion that Booth looked for in all his followers when they came into this union with God and his will, was the outcome of his own experience. Of course, with Booth there was a social sense native to his make-up that was unusually strong even from his early boyhood when he without any conscious religious experience took sides with the Chartists because they were for the poor" and laboring masses. But it is obvious as one scans his life, what a dynamic to his social work was his consciousness of God. In the early lives of many of the great public servants we see this same native social conscience and passion. But with the opening of the doors of the self in mystical experiences new levels of activity are reached and the native

(1) Railton, ALGWB, 306-308

capacity finds its development realized in great steps and strides.

From his conversion crisis on, Booth's life of service found its driving force in his relationship to God. Howard writes of this: (1)

> He was converted at the age of fifteen. He was wrought upon quite independently of human effort, by the direct agency of the Holy Spirit, and there was created in him a great thirst for a new life. The decisiveness, the distinctness, and the attendant circumstances of his conversion he remembered all through his life, as if it had been a transaction of yesterday. Within six hours, as he afterwards told a representative of The Christian World, he was going in and out of the cottages in the back streets, preaching the gospel of that grace which in the freshness and wonder of its saving power rested upon him.

His great experience quickened his sense of the need of others for this same awakening to a higher plane of living. "Conversion had saved his soul and sent him out to save the souls of other people", (2) Booth writes of this new social attitude he received from this early conversion:

> Since that night . . . . . the business of my life has been not only to make a holy character but to life a life of loving activity in the

(1)Howard, PCPP, 326
(2)Begbie, LGWB, I, 78

~~in the~~ service of God and man. I have ever felt that true religion consists not only in being holy myself, but in assisting my Crucified Lord in His work of saving men and women, making them into His Soldiers, keeping them faithful to death, and so getting them into Heaven.

But how was this service to take place and into what specific manner was he to act. "Booth felt that he had to work, that he had to do something, felt that he was definitely charged by God with the work to which he set his hand." (1) His distinct "call" came in a strikingly mystical manner. He writes: (2)

> O Kate, I have found my destiny! These are the people for whose salvation I have been longing all these years. As I passed by the doors of the flaming gin palaces tonight, I seemed to hear a voice sounding in my ears: "Where can you go and find such heathen as these and where is there so great a need for your labors?" And there and then in my soul I offered myself and you and the children up to this great work. Those people shall be our people and they shall have our God for their God.

Such insights and visions came to Booth throughout his life. He looked upon them as coming from God and he gave his whole life in following these leadings

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 275
(2) Howard, PCPP, 329

into the slums of the world. In an article by Hughes we find these striking paragraphs:(1)

> With faith in God and in the vision God had given him, he began his work, and organized it so wisely that before he died he saw his plans lead triumphantly to the achievement of the greatest missionary work . . . . .
> I have know no man in any sphere of human development who transformed so many of the visions God gave him into harmonious achievement as General Booth did.

In a passage by Howard we find Booth's own explanation of how his consciousness of God brought him into a source of power that made the realization of his visions possible. (2)

> When asked for his secret of success he hesitated a second, and I saw the tears come into his eyes and he said: "I will tell you the secret. God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do with the poor of London, I made up my mind, that God would have all of William Booth there was. And if there is anything of power in the Salvation Army today, it is because God

(1) Hughes, Canadian Magazine 396
(2) Howard, PCPP, 340

> has had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life."

It was this mystical consecration that sent Booth into the slums "afflicted by the sins of the whole world." Begbie says of him, "if the test of saintship is passionate devotion to 'the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost', few men have lived carrying so heavy a burden as this man carried, who more deserved to be enrolled among the saints of Christ."

In closing this discussion we shall quote Lady Henry Somerset's estimate of Booth: (1)

> Whenever I hear the Salvation Army criticized, and whenever I myself am inclined to judge it, from a theological point of view, I remind myself of the solitary Soldier in the slums of East London, in the slums of every great city in the world, who lives on next to nothing, who seeks the eternal welfare of souls, and who does everything for love. Always remember that William Booth inspired <u>that</u>. I regard him as the true St. Francis of the modern world, the true St. Francis of our industrial civilization. He shook England by his wonderful book on poverty. He was the first man, to hold up to the Church

(1) Begbie, LGWB, I, 425

and make her face them as they really are, the miseries of the poor. That was a great work, and only a great man, an inspired man, could have accomplished it.

####################

Booth died blind and still by Faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.

(Vachel Lindsay)

SUMMARY

Mysticism and Its Social Values

Mysticism is the term used to denote an actual experience of the consciousness of God. A fellowship or union of a self with a Reality that is Someone other than that self to which it stands in a reciprocal relationship.

There are many behavior types which this experience assumes. It may range from a mild, quiet, inarticulate experience to an extremely unusual and highly emotional ecstacy.

The worth of the experience is seen first in the part it plays in bringing the individual to a higher level of integration through a disciplined struggle to bring one's inner life in harmony with the ideal. It is not only an awakening of the self to this higher level but also a dynamic aid to the individual's attainment of it.

There are tendencies in mystical experiences towards anti-social results but these are not great, especially in the milder forms. It is the ecstatics that are more in line with these isolation tendencies.

The ecstatics and ascetics who do find social vision and power in the experience often become the geniuses of social progress. However, the mystic of the milder sort

does find in his experience a dynamic source of motivation leading to a more effective social life.

This is seen concretely in the historic mystics one of whom, General William Booth, we have taken and analyzed briefly. In his life of social service we have seen the powerful influence his deep consciousness of God had. Though his native social passion revealled itself early in his youth, we have traced the dynamic effects his mystical experiences had upon this passion throughout his life. This was seen dramatically in those major aspects of his inner life, his "conversion", his struggle for "Holiness", his "Call", and consecration. Through his obedience to the "Heavenly visions" and his constant consciousness of the presence of God's influence in his life, he went into all the world healing its sores in his own queer way.

General Bibliography

Addison, C. M., The Theory and Practice of Mysticism: New York, E. P. Dutton and Company; 1918 (TPM)

Brightman, E. S., Religious Values: New York, The Abingdon Press; 1925 p. 165-236 (RV)

Brightman, E. S., The Finding of God: New York, The Abingdon Press; 1931 p. 94-125 (RV)

Brown, W. A., Pathways to Certainty: New York, Charles Scribners' Sons; 1930 p. 118-150 (PC)

Bruce, W. S., The Psychology of Christian Life and Behaviour Edinburgh, T. &. T. Clark; 1923 p. 171-182 (PCLB)

Buckham, John Wright, Mysticism and Modern Life: New York The Abingdon Press; 1915 p. 97-149 p.209-232 (MML)

Coe, George A., The Psychology of Religion: Chicago, The University of Chicago Press; 1916 Chap. XVI (PR)

Conklin, Edmund S., The Psychology of Religious Adjustment New York, The MacMillan Company 1929 p. 140-165 (PRA)

Dyson, W. H., Studies in Christian Mysticism: London, James Clarke and Company; 1913 (SCM)

Garvie, A. E., The Christian Belief in God: New York, Harper & Bros; 1932 p. 82-84; 385-403 (CBG)

Hall, C. C., Christ and the Eastern Soul: Chicago, The University of Chicago Press; 1909 p. 133-170 (CES)

Herman, E., The Meaning and Value of Mysticism: London, James Clarke and Company; 1916 (2nd edition) p.89-104 (MVM)

Hastings, J., Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics: New York Charles Scribners' Sons; 1928 (special edition) p. 84-85 (ERE)

Hocking, W. E., The Meaning of God in Human Experience: New Haven, Yale University Press; 1912 p.341-427 (MGHE)

Hubbard, H. L., Self-Training in Mysticism: London, Christophers; 1921 Chapters I, XVII (SM)

vonHugel, Baron Frederick, The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends: London, J. M. Dent and Sons; 1908 (two volumes) (MER)

Inge, W. R., Christian Mysticism: London, Methuen and Company; 1899 Chapter I (CM)

Inge, W. R., Personal Idealism and Mysticism: London, Longmans, Green and Company; 1907 (PIM)

James, W., The Varieties of Religious Experience: New York, Longmans, Green and Company; 1902 p. 379-429 (VRE)

Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion; London, MacMillan and Company; 1923 Chapters: Intro., ix. (SMR)

King, Henry Chruchill, Theology and the Social Consciousness: New York, MacMillan and Company 1907 Chapters V, VI (TSC)

Leuba, J. H., God or Man?: New York, Henry-Holt and Company; 1933 p. 216-249 (GM)

Leuba, J. H., The Psychology of Mysticism: New York, Harcourt Brace and Company; 1925 (PM)

Louismet, Dom S., Mysticism: True and False: London, Burns and Oates Ltd; 1919 p. 15-24 (MTT)

Otto, Rudolph, (trans. by Bracey and Payne) Mysticism, East and West: New York, MacMillan and Company; 1932 (MEW)

Pratt, J. B., The Religious Consciousness: New York, The MacMillan Company; 1924 p. 310-481 (RE)

Rauschenbusch, W., A Theology for the Social Gospel: New York The MacMillan Company 1917 p. 1-30; 95-109 (TSG)

Scott, W. Major, Aspects of Christian Mysticism: New York, E. P. Dutton & Co; 1907 (ACM)

Selbie, W. B., The Psychology of Religion: London, Oxford University Press; 1924 p. 245-265 (PR)

Sellars, R. W., Religion Coming of Age: New York, MacMillan and Company; 1928 p. 202-236 (RCA)

Sharpe, A. B., Mysticism: Its True Nature and Value: London, Sands and Co., 1910 (MTNV)

Strickland, F. L., Psychology of Religious Experience: New York; The Abingdon Press; 1924 p. 242-277 (PRE)

Thouless, R. H., An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion New York, MacMillan and Company; 1923 chapt. XIV-XV (LPR)

Underhill, Evelyn, Mysticism: New York, E. P. Dutton and Co. 1910 (M)

Underhill, Evelyn, Practical Mysticism: New York, E. P. Dutton and Co.; 1915 (PM)

Underhill, Evelyn, The Essentials of Mysticism: New York, E. P. Dutton and Co.; 1920 (EM)

Underhill, Evelyn, The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today: New York, E. P. Dutton and Co.; 1922 (LSLT)

Underhill, Evelyn, The Mystics of the Church: New York, George H. Doran Co.; (MC)

Valentine, r. F., The Psychology of Personality: New York, D. Appleton and Co.; 1927 Chap. I (PP)

Magazines, Bulletins:

Bennet, Journal of Religion Vol. VI, Sept. 1926 p. 498

Brightman, E. S., Outline of Course on "Religious Values" Boston University 1933-34

Marlatt, E. B., What is a Person? , B. U. Bulletin Vol. XIV No. 15, May 25, 1925

Scudder, V. D., "Mysticism and Social Passion": World Tomorrow 13: 122-5 March, 1930

Weild, Laura H., "The Social and the Mystical": Christian Century 39 (1922) 78-80

SPECIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY ON WILLIAM BOOTH

Begbie, Harold, The Life of General William Booth: New York MacMillan Co.; 1920 (2 volumes) (read 1st volume) (LGWB)

Booth, William, Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army; London, The Salvationist Publishing and Supplies,LTD. (ORSSA)

Booth, General, Religion for Every Day: New York, The Salvationist Army Book Dept. 1902 (RED)

Booth, General, Visions; New York, The Salvation Army Book Dept. 1906 (parts) (V)

Coates, T. F. G., The Prophet of the Poor: New York, E. P. Dutton and Co.; 1906 (parts) (PP)

Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine: New York, The Salvation Army Supplies and Publishing Dept. 1923 (HSAD)

Howard, Harry C., Princes of the Christian Pulpit and Pastorate Nashville, Tenn. Cokesbury, Press. 1927 (chapter on Booth) (PCPP)

Nelson, W. H., Blood and Fire: New York, The Century Co., 1929 (complete) (BF)

Railton, G. S., The Authoritative Life of General William Booth, New York, The Reliance Trading Co. 1912 (parts) (ALGWB)

Hughes, James L.,"World Leaders I have Known", The Canadian Magazine, Vol. LX, 60; 394-6 March 23

The War Cry,
(The Founder's Centennial Birthday Number) April 6, 1929
(No. 2479)

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
1 1719 02556 3737